CS-251

Theory of computation

Göös Mika

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Communication systems	BA4	Obl.
Computer science	BA6	Obl.
HES - IC	E	Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	6
Session	Summer
Semester	Spring
Exam	Written
Workload	180h
Weeks	14
Hours	**4 weekly**
Lecture	2 weekly
Exercises	2 weekly
Number of positions	

Summary

This course constitutes an introduction to theory of computation. It discusses the basic theoretical models of computing (finite automata, Turing machine), as well as, provides a solid and mathematically precise understanding of their fundamental capabilities and limitations.

Content

- Basic models of computation (finite automata, Turing machine)
- Elements of computability theory (undecidability, reducibility)
- Introduction to time complexity theory (P, NP and theory of NP-completeness)

Keywords

theory of computation, Turing machines, P vs. NP problem, complexity theory, computability theory, finite automata, NP-completeness

Learning Prerequisites

Required courses

CS-101 Advanced information, computation, communication I
CS-250 Algorithms

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, the student must be able to:

- Perform a rigorous study of performance of an algorithm or a protocol
- Classify computational difficulty of a decision problem
- Define the notion of NP-completeness
- Analyze various computation models
- Design a reduction between two computational problems
- Characterize different complexity classes
- Explain P vs. NP problem

Transversal skills

- Use a work methodology appropriate to the task.
- Continue to work through difficulties or initial failure to find optimal solutions.

Teaching methods

Ex cathedra with exercises

Assessment methods

Written exam and continuous control

Resources

Moodle Link

- https://go.epfl.ch/CS-251